

Porsche wins all GTD-Pro titles with Pfaff Motorsports

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02/10/2022 Porsche has won the manufacturer's championship in the GTD-Pro class. The customer team Pfaff Motorsports secured the title, with Matt Campbell and Mathieu Jaminet crowned the new driver champions. These were the results after the finale of the 2022 IMSA WeatherTech Sportscar Championship. The Porsche customer team from Canada finished the Petit Le Mans race at Road Atlanta in third place. The Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Wright Motorsports crossed the finish line in fourth place in the GTD category.

The race

For Pfaff Motorsports, the wait was over immediately after the ten-hour race began: With the successful start of the 2022 Petit Le Mans, the team had already notched up enough points to hand all

three titles in the new GTD-Pro class to Porsche, the Canadian squad and the two works drivers Matt Campbell and Mathieu Jaminet. This was the second title in a row for the team with the distinctive and extremely popular Porsche 911 GT3 R decked out in the lumberjack livery. In 2021, Pfaff Motorsports won the GTD category.

The successful Porsche works driver duo Campbell and Jaminet, who are known in the North American sports cars scene as "CamJam", received reinforcement from Felipe Nasr for the endurance race at Road Atlanta. The Brazilian drove strong stints in the first two and a half hours and handed the 911 off to his Australian teammate running in sixth place. Campbell, however, was hit by bad luck: After contact with another GT vehicle, he had to slowly and carefully navigate his Porsche 911 GT3 R back to the pits with a puncture. Consequently, the team lost two laps to the leading vehicles. However, with a clever strategy and some conveniently-timed yellow phases, Pfaff managed to close the gap to the leaders within just one hour. Campbell and Jaminet continued their charge, at times even taking the lead. After the final full course yellow with around 35 minutes left on the clock, a gripping fight for class victory unfolded. After an action-packed race, Pfaff Motorsports' No. 9 car took the flag in fourth place but ultimately inherited third place after a rival was handed a penalty.

"Congratulations to Pfaff Motorsports, our victorious works drivers and the entire team from Weissach, who made the other title victories with the Porsche 911 GT3 R possible. Last year's triumph in the GTD category, now the championship title in the new GTD-Pro class – we're delighted with the Pfaff squad," said Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. "We're just as proud of our partners in the GTD class. Wright Motorsports were in close contention for the title right up to the final race. That's an honourable achievement. We've given the current generation GT3 R a fitting farewell in North America. We're now looking forward to the brand new 911 GT3 R in the GT categories and the 2023 season with the Porsche 963 in the new GTP class."

"We didn't have the fastest car on the track today, but the experienced Pfaff and Wright customer teams managed to get the best out of it," concludes Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. "It's a great story that Pfaff Motorsports secured the 2021 title in the GTD class and did it again the following year in the new GTD-Pro category. Five wins this season is tremendous – no one has ever achieved that many wins in one season before in the GT classes of the IMSA championship. Our Porsche 911 GT3 R was able to showcase its potential over and over again this year. Now we're excited about its successor, which will make its debut at Daytona in 2023."

The Wright Motorsports customer team headed into the 2022 Petit Le Mans with an outside chance of winning the title. The squad from the US state of Ohio drove a flawless race with its drivers Ryan Hardwick (USA), Zacharie Robichon (Canada) and Jan Heylen (Belgium), but failed to score enough points to outstrip the two top teams. The No. 16 Porsche 911 GT3 R crossed the finish line fourth in the GTD class. Nevertheless, the crew did not go home empty-handed: Ryan Hardwick was presented with the "Bob Akin Award" as the best amateur. This accolade guarantees the American business man a grid spot at the 2023 Le Mans 24 Hours.

For the Hardpoint team, the final race of the 2022 season ended after seven hours. The American Rob

Ferriol hit the barriers at turn five with the No. 99 Porsche. The amateur drive was unhurt. Ferriol shared the cockpit with his fellow countryman Nick Boulle and Katherine Legge from the UK.

The 2022 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season is now over. Spectators were given a preview of the coming year with the presentation of four racing cars in the new GTP class, which will race for victory at Daytona, Sebring and other races. This quartet also included the new Porsche 963, which was displayed to the public for the first time in the USA at Road Atlanta. The new hybrid prototype will take part in official tests at Daytona on 6-7 December before tackling the opening round of the 2023 season at the same venue on the last weekend in January.

Drivers' comments on the race

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9):"It feels totally surreal. We've won every title in this tremendous year and we're back on the podium again at the final race. It's amazing what we have achieved as a team. There was only one race where we didn't end up on the podium. That's phenomenal. On one hand, it's a pity that our journey with the Pfaff Motorsports squad ends here. On the other hand, I'm really excited about racing the Porsche 963 next year with Porsche Penske Motorsport."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Once again, the final phase in the dark was crazy – Petit Le Mans is famous for that. We didn't have the fastest car today, but I still thought I had good chances in the thrilling finale. It was a four-way fight with an open-ended outcome. There was a lot of swapping of paint and positions. We love such situations. It wasn't enough to win today but that's okay. Thanks so much to the team for all the great work and strategy. Every single member of the team has become a lifelong friend!"

Ryan Hardwick (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "We tried out very best but we couldn't do more today. I'm extremely proud of the team and my teammates Jan and Zach. Everyone did their utmost but in the end, we were just a few points short of winning the title. Two years ago with Patrick Long, I missed out on winning the big trophy by just two points. Something like that always hurts. On the other hand, it's a huge success to be in the fight for the title all the way to the finale. Now I'm looking forward to the coming year. I accept the invitation to Le Mans and I'll drive the 911 RSR there. And I'm very excited about the new 911 GT3 R in the IMSA series!"

Race results

GTD-Pro class:
1. Hawksworth/Barnicoat/Kirkwood (UK/UK/USA), Lexus RC F GT3 #14, 386 laps
2. De Phillippi/Edwards/Krohn (USA/USA/FIN), BMW M4 GT3 #25, 386 laps
3. Campbell/Jaminet/Nasr (AUS/F/BR), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 386 laps

GTD class:

1. Farnbacher/Bechtolsheimer/Simpson (D/UK/USA), Acura NSX GT3 #66, 387 laps
2. Iribe/Pepper/Priaulx (USA/RSA/UK), McLaren 720S GT3 #70, 387 laps
3. Foley/Auberlen/Dinan (USA/USA/USA), BMW M4 GT3 #96, 386 laps
4. Hardwick/Heylen/Robichon (USA/B/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, 386 laps
12. Ferriol/Legge/Boulle (USA/UK/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #99, 264 laps

The qualifying

The 911 GT3 R fielded by the Porsche customer team Pfaff Motorsports heads into the final race of the 2022 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season from position seven in the GTD-Pro class. Works driver Felipe Nasr avoided taking any risks at Road Atlanta in order to preserve the car. The goal: to win all titles in the ten-hour race on Saturday.

The Porsche customer team Pfaff Motorsports has avoided taking any risks at the final qualifying session of this year's IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. The Brazilian works driver turned just seven cautious laps on the 4.088-kilometre Road Atlanta track at the wheel of his Porsche 911 GT3 R decked out in the popular lumberjack livery. The reason: Pfaff Motorsports only has to cross the starting line at the race on Saturday to score enough points to take home the driver, team and manufacturer titles in the GTD-Pro class. At the so-called "Petit Le Mans" contested over ten hours, Nasr shares driving duties in the No. 9 car with his works driver teammates and Pfaff Motorsports' regular drivers Matt Campbell (Australia) and Mathieu Jaminet (France).

In the GTD class, the Wright Motorsport squad secured a commendable position on the grid. In this category, amateur drivers share the cars with professionals. Zacharie Robichon planted the No. 16 Porsche 911 GT3 R on the ninth grid spot. With his teammates Jan Heylen (Belgium) and Ryan Hardwick (USA), the Canadian still has a chance to claim the title. The identical car fielded by Hardpoint tackles the last race of the 2022 season from P13. The two Americans Rob Ferriol and Nick Boulle share the No. 99 vehicle with Katherine Legge from England.

"The qualifying result doesn't match our expectations," explains Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. "But we know that we'll be strong towards the end of the race, especially in the dark and when the temperatures drop. With this in mind, we're looking ahead and focusing on our race performance." The "Petit Le Mans" starts on Saturday, 1 October, at 10:40 am local time (16:40 pm CEST). Outside the USA and Canada, the entire race can be viewed live on the website imsa.com/tv.

Drivers' comments on the qualifying

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "During the hunt for top times, it was all about getting the tyres up to the optimum temperature. I wasn't able to do that on the front and rear axles at the same time. Still, we've got a long race ahead of us on Saturday and I have no reservations whatsoever that our Porsche 911 GT3 R will be very competitive on the track. I'm firmly convinced that today's qualifying

result doesn't even begin to reflect what will be possible with our car in the race."

Zacharie Robichon (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16):"I tried everything and I was perhaps too aggressive at times. I made mistakes in some laps. However, I don't think I could have suddenly driven even a second faster. That was simply not within the realm of possibility. We'll be faster in the race – it was the exact same situation last year with the car from Pfaff. At the time, we certainly weren't among the fastest, but we still finished in second place. It just goes to show that with a good car, anything is still possible here."

Nick Boulle (Porsche 911 GT3 R #99): "For me, the whole weekend so far has been a learning curve. We modified the car again today. Now I feel really comfortable behind the wheel. In the context of a ten-hour race, that's far more important than sheer speed in qualifying. Maybe a little rain will help us out on race day. For now, it's important to get through the first few hours unscathed."

Qualifying result

GTD-Pro class:
1. Hawksworth/Barnicoat/Kirkwood (UK/UK/USA), Lexus RC F GT3 #14, 1:18.835 minutes
2. Gunn/Riberas/Gamble (UK/E/UK), Aston Martin Vantage GT3 #23, 1:19.043 minutes
3. Serra/Rigon/Calado (BR/I/UK), Ferrari 488 GT3 #62, 1:19.266 minutes
7. Campbell/Jaminet/Nasr (AUS/F/BR), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 1:19.942 minutes

GTD class:
1. Sellers/Snow/Johansson (USA/USA/S), BMW M4 GT3 #1, 1:19.118 minutes
2. Megennis/Lewis/Westphal (USA/USA/USA), Lamborghini Huracan GT3 #39, 1:19.506 minutes
3. Conwright/Holzer/Yount (USA/D/USA), Lamborghini Huracan GT3 #42, 1:19.522 minutes
9. Hardwick/Heylen/Robichon (USA/B/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, 1:20.025 minutes
13. Ferriol/Legge/Boulle (USA/UK/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #99, 1:21.470 minutes

The preview

Porsche's customer teams tackle the final round of this season's IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship with excellent chances to clinch the title. The Canadian Pfaff Motorsports squad are about to win the new GTD-Pro classification with the two Porsche works drivers Matt Campbell (Australia) and Mathieu Jaminet (France). In the GTD class, the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Wright Motorsports has good prospects of claiming the championship title at Road Atlanta.

Thanks to the strong performance of Pfaff Motorsports over the course of the 2022 season, Porsche looks set to win the manufacturers' championship in the GTD-Pro class. Five victories so far this season have put the Canadian team in such a great position that the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R only has to start the race at Road Atlanta to earn enough points and win the manufacturers, drivers and team

championship titles. In the GTD class, in which amateurs and professional drivers share a car, Wright Motorsports currently ranks third with good prospects at the so-called “Petit Le Mans” season finale in the US state of Georgia.

“The expectations are huge: Pfaff Motorsports travels to Petit Le Mans as the leader of the driver and team classifications in the GTD-Pro class, plus Porsche ranks first in the manufacturers’ championship,” explains Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. “Still, this is no reason to sit back and relax. On the contrary: the team and drivers are working with total concentration on the classic. Aside from the final IMSA event, the race at Road Atlanta offers us another unique opportunity to send the latest Porsche 911 GT3 R into retirement with a top result. From 2023, the teams will then field the 992-generation car.”

The ten-hour “Petit Le Mans” race has been a regular fixture on the North American sports car calendar since 1988. The extremely popular event will be contested for the 25th time on the 4.088-kilometre Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. The undulating track located about 80 kilometres northeast of Atlanta in the US state of Georgia features twelve turns – including the famous ‘esses’, an ultra-fast, snake-like passage. On the tradition-steeped circuit close to the town of Braselton, weather conditions often play a critical role: autumn can bring hot temperatures and sunshine as well as torrential rain.

Such unpredictable weather handed Porsche its greatest success to date at Road Atlanta. In 2015, Nick Tandy (United Kingdom), Patrick Pilet (France) and Richard Lietz (Austria) beat even the more-powerful prototypes in heavy rain to clinch a sensational overall victory in the Porsche 911 RSR. The Stuttgart sports car manufacturer has so far notched up a total of 24 class wins at the Petit Le Mans. For Porsche, the race is significant for another reason: Atlanta is the headquarters of Porsche Cars North America.

The customer teams and drivers

In the GTD-Pro category, which replaced the previous GTLM class at the start of the season, Pfaff Motorsports campaigns the ca. 367 kW (500 PS) Porsche 911 GT3 R. The two regular drivers Matt Campbell from Australia and Mathieu Jaminet from France share the cockpit with their Brazilian works driver teammate Felipe Nasr. In January, these three notched up a class win at the 24 Hours of Daytona. In 2021, Pfaff Motorsports took home the GTD championship title and is now set to claim its second straight triumph.

In the GTD class, the American businessman Ryan Hardwick joins forces with Belgium’s Jan Heylen in the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Wright Motorsports. This season, the two won the 24 Hours of Daytona and the Laguna Seca race in the No. 16 car. At the ten-hour endurance classic at Road Atlanta, the two regular drivers will receive reinforcement from Canadian Zacharie Robichon. In the championship standings, the team is just 57 points off the top of the table. At Petit Le Mans, a total of 385 points are awarded in the qualifying and race. The Hardpoint customer squad contest the GTD class with the two Americans Rob Ferriol and Nick Boulle as well as Katherine Legge from England.

Drivers' comments before the race

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "The minute we start the race, we'll be eligible to earn points – and then we'll have the championship in the bag. Of course, the situation couldn't be more perfect for the finale at Road Atlanta. We're not under any pressure, we just want to enjoy the race. I really like Road Atlanta and I won my class there in the past two years. Now I'm keen to continue that streak and notch up another victory with our current Porsche 911 GT3 R. We're feeling optimistic after our two-day test at the track with Felipe."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "We're in a great position, which means we can just have fun with the team. Once we get off to a smooth start and we have the title safely in our hands, we'll step on the gas. We aim to be at the top of the podium again. If we do this, we'll go down in IMSA history: no one has ever managed six class wins in one season before. Matt and I will switch to the new Porsche 963 from Porsche Penske Motorsport in 2023, but for now, we'd like to give this fantastic Porsche 911 GT3 R a proper farewell."

Jan Heylen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "We start every season with the desire to still be in contention for the title at the final race. And that's exactly the case for me and my teammates at Wright Motorsports this season. Our current chances in the championship are hugely motivating for the race at Road Atlanta. It won't be easy, but our hopes are by no means ridiculous. We'll do our absolute utmost to take home the GTD class title at the end of the season."

The schedule (local time, CEST -6 hours)

Thursday, 29 September
9:50 am to 11:20 am: Free practice 1
2:55 pm to 4:40 pm: Free practice 2
7:30 pm to 9:00 pm: Free practice 3

Friday, 30 September
3:40 pm to 3:55 pm: Qualifying GTD-Pro / GTD

Saturday, 1 October
9:15 am to 9:35 am: Warm-up
12:10 pm to 10:10 pm: Race

Video

https://newstv.porsche.com/porschevideos/225816_en_6000000.mp4
https://newstv.porsche.com/porschevideos/225777_en_6000000.mp4

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